

BENWELL AND FENHAM

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1895.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE:

PRINTED BY CAIL & SONS, 29 AND 31, QUAYSIDE.

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TO THE CHAIRMAN & MEMBERS OF THE BENWELL
AND FENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

GENTLEMEN,

It is again my duty to lay before you the Annual Report required by the Local Government Board to be made to you, a copy of which I will, in accordance with their instructions, forward to them and the clerk of the Northumberland County Council in due course.

IMPRIMIS.—I must congratulate you on the fact that for 1894 your Authority, of all the urban districts in Northumberland, had the lowest death rate, and, although not the highest birth rate, ranked third (five only below the highest). Usually, such a prolific condition is accompanied by a high rate of mortality; to this rule Benwell and Fenham was an exception.

I take this opportunity also to thank you for the uniform kindness and courtesy you have shown towards me, and to assure you that every effort on my part will be directed in the future, as it has been in the past, towards discharging my duties with regularity and effect.

POPULATION.—For statistical purposes the population of your Authority is taken as 10,500.

BIRTHS.

During the year, 410 births (218 males and 192 females) were registered, equal to a rate of 39 per thousand per annum of the population.

1895	...	...	39
1894	...	...	39·7
1893	...	...	39·9
1892	...	...	44·2
1891	...	...	46·3
1890	...	...	43·7

giving a average of 42 for the six years. In 1894 the birth rate of the urban districts of Northumberland was 33·9; for England and Wales, 29·60.

The per centage of deaths under one year, numbered in proportion to the recorded births, is 19·7.

1895	...	...	19·7
1894	...	...	8·56
1893	...	...	17·2
1892	...	...	15·6
1891	...	...	18·1
1890	...	...	17·8

BIRTHS.—

			Males.		Females.		
January	...	...	14	...	17	...	31
February	...	...	13	...	13	...	26
March	...	...	18	...	13	...	31
April ...	...	...	13	...	25	...	38
May ...	...	...	21	...	15	...	36
June ...	...	...	21	...	23	...	44
July ...	...	...	14	...	15	...	29
August	...	...	23	...	17	...	40
September	22	...	12	...	34
October	14	...	11	...	25
November	16	...	12	...	28
December	29	...	19	...	48

TOTALS	...	218	...	192	...	410
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DEATHS.

During the year 210 deaths were registered from all causes and at all ages.

1895	...	...	210
1894	...	...	130
1893	...	...	215
1892	...	...	177
1891	...	...	197
1890	...	...	182

THE MORTALITY.—

1895	...	...	20·0
1894	...	...	13·0
1893	...	...	21·5
1892	...	...	17·7
1891	...	...	19·7
1890	...	...	18·2

MONTHLY RETURNS.—

DEATHS.—

	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.	1891.
January ...	14	11	15	35	12
February ...	15	13	11	11	8
March ...	18	9	15	15	10
April ...	12	12	12	15	16
May ...	12	6	18	6	26
June ...	9	10	16	12	30
July ...	23	7	21	9	32
August ...	22	9	10	15	25
September ...	26	11	14	15	18
October ...	18	9	20	15	8
November ...	21	25	12	20	16
December ...	20	8	33	9	14

THE YEAR'S DEATHS.—

LOCALITIES.—

	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.	1891.	1890.
South Benwell ...	72	41	61	69	63	59
New Benwell ...	47	34	44	40	46	38
Priestman's Cottages and Handyside's Buildings..	9	5	11	11	11	10
Delaval ...	20	8	12	10	20	21
Benwell and Denton ...	18	10	17	4	10	7
Fenham ...	1	1	3	0	4	3
River Tyne ...	3	0	1	4	1	1
Railway ...	0	1	2	0	0	0
Scotswood ...	37	30	54	39	42	44

AGES.—

DEATHS.—

	Under 1 year.	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 40	40 to 60	60 and above.
1895 ...	81	39	8	13	8	29	32
1894 ...	34	19	11	8	12	17	29
1893 ...	70	59	12	0	17	24	24
1892 ...	68	31	9	5	14	19	24
1891 ...	84	30	11	3	14	21	23
1890 ...	79	28	7	12	16	19	22

Although the number of infantile deaths has been exceeded, in 1891, the above record of 81 during the year 1895 indicates the source from which mainly the unfavourable contrast between the mortality of 1894 and 1895 arises.

INFANTILE DEATHS.—81 (equal 38·5 per cent. of the year's mortality) were of children under one year of age.

1895	...	...	38·5
1894	...	...	26·1
1893	...	...	32·4

CAUSES.—

	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.	1891.							
Premature Birth and Debility..	15	...	9	...	13	...	16	...	20			
Bronchitis and Pneumonia	...	17	...	4	...	9	...	8	...	14		
Convulsions	10	...	10	...	16	...	14	...	18
Whooping Cough	1	...	0	...	2	...	5	...	1
Meningitis	2	...	0	...	2	...	1	...	4
Marasmus	6	...	1	...	5	...	7	...	10
Measles	0	...	0	...	9	...	1	...	2
Heart Disease...	0	...	0	...	0	...	1	...	3
Diarrhœa	4	...	1	...	3	...	0	...	3
Intestinal Catarrh and Gastro Euleritis	...	20	...	4	...	6	...	5	...	2		
Syphilis	2	...	1	...	0	...	1	...	0
Spina Bifida	4	...	0	...	1	...	2	...	0

Of these infantile deaths, DISORDERS OF THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM accounted for—

In 1895	...	...	20·9
1894	...	...	11·7
1893	...	...	13·0
1892	...	...	11·7
1891	...	...	16·6

DISORDERS OF THE DIGESTIVE SYSTEM—

1895	...	...	36·2
1894	...	...	20·5
1893	..	...	20·3
1892	...	...	17·6
1891	...	...	19·0

PREMATURE BIRTH AND CONGENITAL DEBILITY—

1895	...	...	18·7
1894	...	...	26·4
1893	...	...	18·0
1892	...	...	23·5
1891	...	...	23·8

NERVOUS DISORDERS AND DENTITION—

1895	...	...	14·8
1894	...	...	29·4
1893	...	...	23·1
1892	...	...	22·0
1891	...	...	21·4

ZYMOTIC DISEASE—

1895	...	...	1·2
1894	...	...	5·9
1893	...	...	13·0
1892	...	...	8·8
1891	...	...	4·7

It is to be noted that the causes of the deaths of these children under one year are not attributed to Measles, Whooping Cough, or Scarlet Fever, but to Irritation of the Bowels, Inflammation of Brain, Wasting Disease, Diarrhœa, and Premature Birth and Debility. In the absence of epidemics, diseases of children should be few. There is truth in the saying that the lives of children are more in the hands of parents than under the control of sanitary authorities. Wherever there is considerable infantile mortality there is something wrong, as I have in former reports stated. Many mothers are careless in the feeding of infants, many are no more than girls when the duty of infant rearing is imposed on them. When nature's provision fails, it is not to be wondered at that mistakes are made in infant dietary and management. It would be very instructive if an entry was made on the death certificate of each child under one year as to whether it had been brought up on the breast or on artificial food. In Berlin this is done. In ten thousand deaths it was discovered that three-fourths, or seven thousand six hundred and forty six, were artificially fed. A physician in Bavaria showed that out of four hundred deaths of children from summer diarrhœa that came under his observation, ninety six per cent. had been artificially reared.

One of the great difficulties in artificial feeding is to keep the milk free from contagion of bacilli, which are always floating about in the atmosphere, and which, when introduced into the digestive organs, produce green stools and bowel irritation, thereby lowering the vitality and inviting disease. Milk is an admirable medium for the cultivation of these microbes, and its exposure to the air, more especially in a warm atmosphere, favours their development. Soothing syrups and teething powders contribute their quota of danger to infants, the mothers thereby securing rest for the child and liberty for herself.

Dirty feeding bottles are also a source of danger. All these explain some of the sources of infant mortality, but the main one I think is starch poisoning. It is well known how slow mothers are to adopt rational means of feeding infants, the general idea being that the sooner they get solid food the quicker they will grow, and they are given starch foods before they can saccharise them. Cornflour, sago and arrowroot are crammed into the unfortunate infants, raising irritation of the mucous membranes and undergoing injurious fermentations. The baby can derive no nourishment and much harm from such feeding. No bread, biscuits, gruel, arrowroot, cornflour, rice, sago, potatoes, &c., should be given to young infants.

GENERAL DEATH RATE—ALL AGES.

CAUSES.—DISORDERS OF RESPIRATORY SYSTEM caused 32 deaths, 15·2 per cent. of the mortality.

15·2	in	1895
17·6	„	1894
11·9	„	1893
16·9	„	1892

PHTHISIS caused 19 deaths, 9 per cent. of the mortality.

HEART DISEASE caused 17 deaths.

8·0	per cent.	in	1895
16·7	„		1894
6·9	„		1893
8·9	„		1892
10·1	„		1891

DEATHS OVER 60 YEARS OF AGE.—32 deaths, equal to 15·2 per cent. of the entire mortality, were of persons over 60 years of age.

15·2 in 1895
22·3 „ 1894
12·0 „ 1893
16·8 „ 1892
11·6 „ 1891

ZYMOTIC DEATHS.—

	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.	1891.
Measles	0	6	40	7	6
Whooping Cough	4	2	2	12	9
Diphtheria	1	0	0	0	11
Puerperal Fever	2	0	0	1	1
Erysipelas	0	1	0	0	1
Typhoid	0	2	0	2	4
Scarlet Fever	1	2	5	0	0

These Zymotic Diseases are responsible for 6·6 per cent. of the mortality.

6·6 in 1895
11·5 „ 1894
23·7 „ 1893
12·5 „ 1892
13·1 „ 1891

And are equal to a Zymotic rate of 1·3 per 1000 on the estimated population of the district. For England and Wales it was 1·7.

1·3 in 1895
1·5 „ 1894
5·1 „ 1893
2·2 „ 1892
2·6 „ 1891

LOCALITIES OF ZYMOTIC DEATHS.—

	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.
South Benwell	6	6	10	16
New Benwell	4	3	11	0
Handyside's Buildings & Priestman's Cottages	2	1	5	0
Scotswood	1	3	14	3
Benwell	0	1	2	0
Delaval	1	1	9	3

COMPULSORY NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

has during the year been made as follows :—

AS SCARLET FEVER.—

	1895.	1894.	1893.	1892.
January	... 1 ...	3 ...	12 ...	2
February	... 1 ...	1 ...	5 ...	8
March	... 1 ...	2 ...	5 ...	4
April	... 5 ...	2 ...	1 ...	4
May	... 5 ...	0 ...	7 ...	5
June	... 4 ...	1 ...	6 ...	3
July	... 13 ...	0 ...	4 ...	3
August	... 26 ...	3 ...	1 ...	7
September	... 20 ...	4 ...	1 ...	4
October	... 9 ...	3 ...	9 ...	3
November	... 8 ...	1 ...	17 ...	1
December	... 15 ...	0 ...	13 ...	2

LOCALITIES.—

Benwell	... ..	19
New Benwell	... ..	15
South Benwell	... ..	36
Scotswood	... ..	19
Delaval	... ..	8
Handyside's Buildings and Priestman's Cottages	... ..	11

AS SCARLET FEVER.—

LOCALITIES, with time of year notification made.

January	... Benwell	... ..	1
February	... New Benwell	... ..	1
March	... South Benwell	... ..	1
April	... Do.	... ..	4
	Scotswood	... ..	1
May	... Do.	... ..	3
	South Benwell	... ..	2
June	... Handyside's Buildings	... ..	2
	Benwell	... ..	2
July	... Do.	... ..	7
	South Benwell	... ..	4
	Handyside's Buildings	... ..	2

August	...	Scotswood	...	...	3
		Handyside's Buildings	...	...	7
		South Benwell	...	...	7
		Benwell	...	...	6
		Delaval	...	...	3
September	...	Do.	...	...	2
		South Benwell	...	...	8
		Scotswood	...	...	5
		New Benwell	...	...	5
October	...	Do.	...	...	3
		South Benwell	...	...	4
		Scotswood	...	...	2
November	...	Do.	...	...	2
		Delaval	...	...	2
		New Benwell	...	...	2
		South Benwell	...	...	2
December	...	Do.	...	...	11
		New Benwell	...	...	2
		Benwell	...	...	2

1895. 1894. 1893. 1892.

As Typhoid.—January	...	...	0	...	3	...	0	...	1
February	...	...	0	...	3	...	0	...	1
March	...	...	0	...	0	...	0	...	0
April	...	...	0	...	0	...	1	...	0
May	...	...	0	...	1	...	0	...	0
June	...	...	0	...	2	...	0	...	1
July	...	...	0	...	0	...	0	...	0
August	...	...	0	...	2	...	1	...	0
September	...	...	1	...	2	...	1	...	1
October	...	...	1	...	2	...	1	...	1
November	...	...	0	...	3	...	1	...	0
December	...	...	0	...	2	...	0	...	0
LOCALITIES.—Benwell	...	...	1	...	2	...	0	...	1
New Benwell	...	...	1	...	4	...	2	...	1
Scotswood	...	...	0	...	1	...	0	...	0
Priestman's Cottages and Handyside's Buildings	...	...	0	...	7	...	1	...	1
South Benwell	...	...	0	...	6	...	2	...	3

1895. 1894. 1893.

As Erysipelas.—January	...	...	1	...	1	...	1
February	...	...	0	...	1	...	1
March ...	...	...	2	...	0	...	1
April ...	...	...	2	...	0	...	1
May ...	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
June ...	...	...	2	...	0	...	0
July ...	...	...	1	...	0	...	1
August ...	...	...	0	...	2	...	0
September	...	...	2	...	1	...	0
October	...	...	1	...	2	...	1
November	...	...	2	...	2	...	1
December	...	...	1	...		...

LOCALITIES.—South Benwell...	...	5	...		...
Scotswood	...	2	...		...
New Benwell	...	2	...		...
Benwell	...	1	...		...
Delaval	...	1	...		...
Handyside's Buildings..	...	3	...		...

As Diphtheria.—January	...	...	1	...	0	...	0
February	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
March ...	...	...	1	...	1	...	0
April ...	...	...	0	...	1	...	0
May ...	...	...	0	...	0	...	1
June ...	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
July ...	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
August ...	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
September	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
October	...	...	1	...	1	...	0
November	...	...	9	...	0	...	0
December	...	...	2	...	0	...	0

LOCALITIES.—Benwell	...	...	2	...	0	...	0
South Benwell...	...	11	...	0	...	...	0
New Benwell	...	1	...	2	...	...	1
Scotswood	...	0	...	1	...	...	0

As Puerperal Fever.—

January	...	...	0	...	1	...	0
July ...	...	...	1	...	0	...	0
October	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
LOCALITIES.—Delaval	...	...	1	...	0	...	0
New Benwell	...	...	0	...	1	...	0

		1895. 1894.	
AS MEASLES.—			
January	...	...48	... 0
February	...	... 6	... 0
March	...	... 1	... 1
April	...	... 1	... 0
May	...	... 6	... 1
June	...	... 0	...10
July	...	... 0	... 2
August	...	... 0	... 0
September	...	... 3	...10
October	...	... 4	...25
November	...	...48	...25
December	...	...33	...67
LOCALITIES.—			
New Benwell	...	...44	...16
South Benwell	...	...96	...42
Handyside's Buildings	..	1	... 0
Paradise	...	... 6	... 0
Scotswood	...	... 4	...61
Delaval	...	... 0	...19
Benwell	...	... 0	... 3

MEASLES.—If the notification has not had an appreciable effect in staying the epidemic of this disease, it has resulted in the examination of many premises, the investigation of whose sanitary condition was salutary. In many cases of this disease it is considered not necessary to call in a medical man, consequently notification only follows by the information of the School Board officer, and where children are too young to attend school notification is escaped altogether. The mortality from the disease is registered as six, and was not—as in our experience at Scotswood—caused by the incidence of the fever, but by sequelæ, such as diarrhoea and bronchitis. The notification of measles is a heavy tax on the rate-payers. Many contest its advisability; to this I cannot agree. If there is one thing more than another which sanitary authorities should be kept acquainted with, it is the incidence of zymotic disease. It is better to pay for such information on an outbreak occurring than to become tardily acquainted with its presence by its disastrous effect in increasing the bill of mortality of the district.

SCARLET FEVER.—There is no doubt that in this disease isolation properly carried out is the key of the situation, and for at least six weeks; before the expiration of that time desquamation is seldom completed, and until it is exposure brings danger to everyone liable

to take the disease. There is no month in 1895 when the district was free from scarlet fever. No doubt we are very subject to external influences. Adjacent to the city and to the adjoining authority, children from us attend their schools. In the latter half of the year ninety-one cases were notified. The type of the disease was mild, and only one death is registered from it; its very mildness, however, is a source of danger. Parents cannot realize that such cases require a lengthened isolation, and after a weary, futile attempt (owing to the vivacity of their children) to isolate, leave matters to their own course. One case indicative of parents' appreciation of the necessity of isolation occurred. They enforced the rigorous abstention of the children of their infected house from school, but thought there was no harm in their going to a crowded country flower show and mingling lovingly with their schoolmates.

TYPHOID has been conspicuous by its absence. Two cases were notified, both coming to the Authority ill. The record of Handyside's Buildings presents the most marked contrast; none to seven in 1895. Assiduous attention to the cleansing of the ashpits has been paid, the maintenance of their structure (a very difficult matter in their dilapidated condition) enforced; the back lane should be paved; it is often like back Delaval Terrace, foul and unsanitary.

ERYSIPELAS.—Fourteen cases; no deaths. Many of these were mere local inflammations, secondary to wounds or ulcers. Rigorous attention to the condition of the premises was paid.

DIPHTHERIA.—Excepting for the nine cases in November, it would not be necessary specially to make any remarks. Diphtheria has been very prevalent in the North of England. The cases occurred in South Benwell, in a very limited area. Personal inter-communication was not a factor in the spread of the disease. In these cases special attention was directed to the drains and sewers, and disinfectant measures generally. The anti-toxin treatment was not tried in the fatal case.

GENERAL WORK.

COW SHEDS AND DAIRIES.—A due supervision has been maintained; twenty-one visits have been paid to each; all found to be in good order. No new ones have been licensed this year. There have been three complaints as to the purity of milk. Eight samples tested; they were found to be unadulterated. There are ten cow sheds, with one hundred and twenty-eight cows. The water, with one exception, is supplied from Whittle Dene; at Gowland's it is

supplied from a well, which is uncontaminated. In addition to the above there are eleven purveyors of milk in the district, whose storage is subjected to inspection.

DISTRICT VISITATION.—Beyond visits to infectious cases, once a month some portion of the Authority is selected for special examination. The Sanitary Inspector every day vigilantly looks out for sanitary shortcomings.

SCHOOLS.—Special attention is given to the sanitary condition of schools, and on the outbreak of scarlet fever at Benwell a personal examination of every pupil was made, to determine whether a desquamating pupil had originated the outbreak.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.—These are regularly visited and kept in good order.

INSPECTOR'S SANITARY WORK.

					Found.	Abated.	In hand.
Choked and defective drains	...	...	...	...	60	60	0
Do. do. gullies	...	...	...	...	148	147	1
Do. do. waste pipes	...	...	...	...	12	10	2
Do. do. water closets	...	...	...	...	58	52	6
Foul privies	...	...	...	...	20	20	0
Defective privies	...	...	...	...	7	7	0
Foul Ashpits	...	...	...	...	44	40	4
Defective Ashpits	...	...	...	...	6	5	1
Do. do. hatches	...	...	...	...	68	63	5
Soakage from ashpits	...	...	...	...	53	53	0
Defective paving in yards	...	...	...	...	45	40	5
Foul yards	...	...	...	...	24	24	0
No water supply	...	...	...	...	8	8	0
No sink in yard	...	...	...	...	1	1	0
Passages limewashed	...	...	...	...	41	41	0
Cases of overcrowding	...	...	...	...	7	7	0
Houses closed, unfit for habitation	...	...	...	...	3	0	0
Do. rendered fit	...	...	...	...	0	0	0
Dangerous buildings and walls	...	...	...	...	18	17	1
Premises disinfected	...	...	...	...	160		
Visits to infected houses	...	...	...	...	810		
Disinfectants supplied	...	...	...	...	195		
Owners or agents interviewed	...	...	...	...	409		
Informal notices served	...	...	...	...	318		
Formal do.	...	...	...	...	57		

ASHES, REFUSE, &c.

Collected monthly from ashpits...	...	2,295	loads.
Do. weekly do. ...	...	3,866	,,
Do. daily do. ...	...	1,097	,,

7,258

Of these—Sent to sea ... 2,509

Laid on land ... 4,749

7,258

Number of large ashpits ... 376 cleared monthly.

Do. small do. ... 1,220 do. weekly.

In addition, a daily collection from tubs is made, which averages 92 loads per month.

REFUSE DEPOSITS.—Collections are deposited in a field at Fox and Hounds for the use of farmers and gardeners. That to be disposed of at sea is temporarily tipped at Delaval until a hopperful is collected.

BUILDING OPERATIONS.

Just now this trade is fairly brisk. Twenty-six new houses have been erected; ten alterations and forty-six plans have been sanctioned. Trade generally is fair.

POOR LAW RELIEF.

1895	...	...	...	£355	2	2
1894	...	...	...	345	0	0
1893	...	...	...	341	0	0
1892	...	...	...	330	5	0
1891	...	...	...	288	8	1

I am,

Yours obediently,

N. HARDCASTLE,

Medical Officer of Health.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne,

January, 1896.

(A) TABLE OF DEATHS during the Year 1895, in the Urban Sanitary District of BENWELL AND FENHAM, classified according to DISEASES, AGES, and LOCALITIES.

NAMES of LOCALITIES adopted for the purpose of these Statistics ; public institutions being shown as separate localities. (Columns for Population and Births are in Table B.)	MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES AT SUBJOINED AGES.								MORTALITY FROM SUBJOINED CAUSES, DISTINGUISHING DEATHS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE YEARS OF AGE.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				
	At all Ages.	Under 1 Year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 60.	60 and upwards.	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	1	2	3	4	5	FEVERS.				Cholera.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whoopings Cough.	Diarrhoea and Dysentery.	Rheumatic Fever.	Ague.	Phthisis.	Bronchitis, Pneumonia, and Pleurisy.	Heart Disease.	Injuries.	All other Diseases.	Total.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																							
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The subjoined numbers have also to be taken into account in judging of the above records of mortality.

Deaths occurring outside the district among persons belonging thereto.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Deaths occurring within the district among persons not belonging thereto	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Area and Population of the District to which this Return relates :—

Area in Acres	1,367
Population (1891)	10,501
Death Rates { General: 21 per 1,000 population, estimated to middle of 1895.	
{ Infant (under one year of age): 197 per 1,000 births registered.	

